Monday, March 30, 2009 ★ 18 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 112 P18

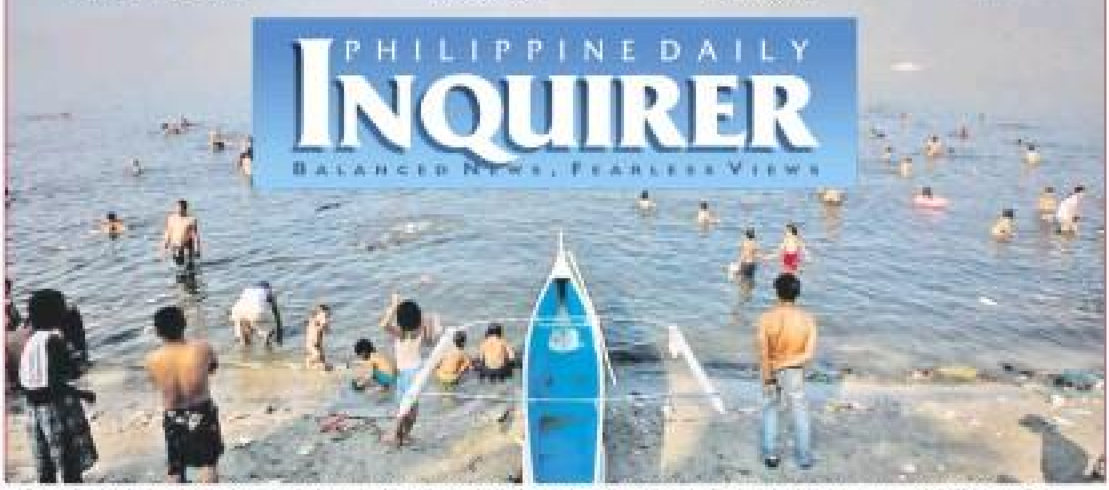
Dollywood: Ces' captors still ask for 'pasa load' ENTERTAINMENT / E1

Think tank sees 30% chance of economic depression BUSINESS / B1

Filipino graduates summa cum laude from Boston U LEARNING / G1

Bill to split Camarines Norte into 2 districts ACROSS / A17

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS



DIRTY DIP People still go for a quick dip in Manila Bay despite warnings from authorities of the health hazards posed by the dirty water. The ritual is irresistible as temperatures rise to 35.1 degrees Celsius. According to the weather bureau, summer this year may be hotter and longer than usual because of its early start. (See related story on Page A6.)

CHR probes 800 kills by Davao death squad

De Lima airs concern over public acceptance

By Nikko Dizon

THE KILLINGS HAVE GONE ON FOR TOO LONG and it's time to hold those responsible to account.

With this message, Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chair Leila de Lima is set to open today a public inquiry into a series of unexplained killings of more than 800 people in Davao City since 1998.

Many of the victims were people purportedly with criminal records, giving rise to suspicions that the killings were the work of the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS), a shadowy vigilante group.

For De Lima, what is "most alarming ... is the growing culture or mentality of public acceptance of the executions."

"This is worse than apathy and indifference," she told the Inquirer in an interview before she left for Davao City, noting that the killings had been justified as one way of making the place crime-free.

De Lima said she had also received several e-mail letters

CHR PROBES / A4

Abus insist on total AFP pullout

By Julie S. Alipala in Zamboanga City and Christine O. Avendaño and Erika Sauler in Manila

TIME IS TICKING ON A THREAT by Abu Sayyaf kidnappers to behead three workers of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) held hostage on Jolo Island.

A statement issued yesterday even as the military was set to complete in the afternoon a partial withdrawal of troops ringing Barangay Kappong in the Indanan forest, where the hostages were being held since they were abducted on Jan. 15.

The Abu Sayyaf is insisting on its demand for a total pullout of troops or it will decapitate one

ABU SAYYAF / A2



LIGHTS OUT For one hour starting 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, many buildings in Makati City are swept in darkness compared to the usual (inset).

RP shines in dim Earth Hour

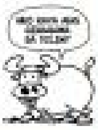
By Inquirer Bureaus

TESSY PETTYJOHN HAD ALL THE lights in her house in Calamba City in Laguna turned off on Saturday night, leaving only the fridge on, in celebration of Earth Hour.

"I believe in this. I am a green person, recycling most stuff and never wasting—saving energy most of the time. Earth gets my support," she said.

Earth Hour was a global effort that encouraged people from all over the world to turn off their lights on March 28, from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., to raise awareness about the effects of climate change and global warming.

RP SHINES / A8



Cyber spies hack into DFA computers

THE COMPUTER NETWORK OF the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has been infiltrated by a cyber spy network based mainly in China, Canadian researchers said on Saturday.

The Philippines is one of the 103 countries where classified documents from government and private organizations, including the computers of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan exiles, have been hacked into, according to the Information Warfare Monitor (IWM).

IWM is composed of researchers from Ottawa-based think tank SecDev Group and University of Toronto's Munk Center for International Studies.

The Canadian researchers detected a cyber espionage network involving more than 1,295 compromised computers from the ministries of foreign affairs of the Philippines, Iran, Bangladesh, Latvia, Indonesia, Brunei, Barbados and Bhutan.

The researchers also discov-

CYBER / A6

Panlilio bid new Church intervention

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE CLERGY IS ONE OF THE most underrepresented sectors in the formal power structure in the Philippines, although the Catholic Church has wielded considerable unofficial political power and influence in the country since Spanish rule up to the present indigenous Republic.

From this perspective, the movement to draft Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio, the Catholic priest "on leave" from his priestly duties, for the presidency in the 2010 national elections represents a precedent-shattering breakthrough in the selection process for the highest office of the land.

In fact, Panlilio broke the

PANLILIO BID / A2

Pinoys feel climate change pinch

By Philip C. Tubeza

ARIEL DOMINGUEZ HAS BEEN fishing for 16 years in waters considered to have the most diverse marine life on the planet.

But because of climate change and the threat of rising sea levels and lower fish yields, the 42-year-old fisherman from Nasugbu town in Batangas is thinking that he may eventually abandon his job, pack up his belongings and move to higher ground.

"The ice [caps] in the North Pole are melting. If there's an

PINOYS / A22

Red guerrillas tap YouTube, Facebook to fan revolution

By Jocelyn R. Uy

(First of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

NPA at 40

THE COMMUNIST NEW PEOPLE'S Army (NPA) has gone a long way since it was founded on an evening 40 years ago in a hut illuminated by light bulbs rigged from a car battery in a Tarlac barrio without running water or electricity.

Today, NPA guerrillas are harnessing cyberspace, using such popular networking sites as Facebook and YouTube, to keep the flames of their revolution alive in spite of efforts by President Macapagal-Arroyo to consign the movement to history before her term ends next year.

"We feel that the NPA is still the number one threat as far as the peace and order situation in

RED GUERRILLAS / A22

Stories told in words and music

By Sebastián Quesada
Inquirer Research

STORYTELLING WITH MUSIC.

For the first time since the Inquirer Read-Along was launched two years ago, words and musical instruments were used to tell a story.

STORIES / A22



THIS TIME WITH MUSIC Mike Santos and other Malasaka Band members read and perform during the "read-along" session in Makati.

Second FRONT PAGE

SUPERLOTTO 6/49

P32,460,094.80

House seat GMA option after 2010–JDV

'That's her fallback position to escape lawsuits if Cha-cha fails'

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO COULD RUN for a congressional seat in her home province of Pampanga if efforts to amend the Constitution through a House-instigated constituent assembly (Con-ass) fail.

Panlilio dared: File raps now vs GMA if you have proof

By Christian V. Esguerra

Report: Mancao, Dumlao return may be delayed

[illegible]

'It's Ping who's gone berserk'

[illegible]

Tamano on eminent group: Thanks, but no thanks

[illegible]

Foreign guarantors

[illegible]

Root causes

[illegible]

Global warming meet set

[illegible]

Tax rules for 2008 confusing, taxing, say CPAs

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

Unnecessary delays

Deadline adjustments

Scattered rains in forecast

The Daily Gospel

Monday, March 30, 2009



24 fabulous nights await five lucky MasterCard® winners at any Shangri-La Hotel in Asia.

There's never been a better time to use your Philippine-issued MasterCard abroad. From March 16, 2009, every time you spend USD50 (or its foreign currency equivalent) in a single overseas transaction on your MasterCard, you automatically earn one raffle entry to win 24 nights stay at any Shangri-La Hotel in Asia Pacific. That's not all, there's going to be a total of five winners in this lucky draw.

So hurry, promotion ends June 30, 2009.

SHANGRI-LA

MasterCard

CHR probes 800 kills by Davao death squad



DE LIMA: Local officials must protect society from killings.



DUTERTE: Criminals are targets of assassinations.

[illegible]

Inexplicable killings

[illegible]

Hired killers

[illegible]

Disturbing statements

[illegible]

Gang wars blamed

[illegible]

Copycat executions

[illegible]

Cyber spies hack into DFA computers

[illegible]

Malicious software

[illegible]

Real-time evidence

[illegible]

Viruses

[illegible]

Whaling information

[illegible]

Transcripts

[illegible]

Panlilio bid new Church intervention

[illegible]

CBCP warning

[illegible]

Vatican policy

[illegible]

Rechanneling clamor

[illegible]

Different from Sin

[illegible]

Frightening

[illegible]

Special visa eyed for foreign employers of OFWs

FOREIGN EMPLOYERS OF overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) may soon be granted multiple entry visas if a proposed visa arrangement between the Bureau of Immigration (BI) and representatives of the overseas employment industry pushes through.

The proposed visa that would allow foreign employers of OFWs to remain in the Philippines indefinitely is an offshoot of the Special Visa for Employment Generation (SVEG) the BI approved earlier.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan said the visa for OFW employers is intended to create more job opportunities for Filipinos like the SVEG.

"The SVEG creates more jobs in the country while the OFW employer's visa creates more jobs for Filipinos in other countries," Libanan said in a statement.

Libanan is lobbying for the grant of multiple entry visas to foreigners who hire at least 100 OFWs. The visa arrangement was proposed by the Federated Association of Manpower Exporters (Fame).

Fame executive director Lito Soriano said the proposed visa was the result of talks between the BI and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). The proposal has been submitted to the President.

"We want foreign employers to have an easier time looking for skilled and talented workers in the Philippines. We also want to give more job opportunities to Filipinos through this visa arrangement," Soriano said.

Once approved by Malacañang, the rules for the foreign employers visa would be established by the BI's board of commissioners chaired by Libanan.

Jerome Aning

OFWs want DOLE officials in Libya axed for 'neglect'

Letter of complaint

Dialogue with representatives

RP gives $10,000 for Gaza relief effort

THE PHILIPPINES HAS DONATED $10,000 to the United Nations Flash Humanitarian Appeal for Gaza, according to Ambassador Erlinda F. Basilio, Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva.

In a dispatch to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Basilio said the Flash Appeal, issued in February by UN Undersecretary General and Emergency Relief Coordinator Sir John Holmes, is in support of the UN system's efforts in providing humanitarian relief to the people of Gaza.

The conflict in Gaza earlier this year killed over 1,300 Palestinians, injured 5,300 and displaced tens of thousands. A number of Filipinos married to Palestinians, were affected by the conflict.

Basilio said the Philippines supported the establishment of a Palestinian state side by side with the state of Israel. *Cynthia D. Balana*

House bill would protect fresh nursing graduates

By Leila B. Salaverria

A LAWMAKER IS SEEKING TO STOP THE practice of some hospitals of making nursing graduates pay for training to let them get the work experience necessary to qualify for jobs abroad.

Laguna Rep. Edgar San Luis has filed a bill penalizing public and private hospitals that make the new nurses pay them, saying it was tantamount to exploitation.

"No matter what hospital administrators call the pernicious practice—training, skills building, volunteer work or whatever—what they are doing is plain and simple exploitation," San Luis said in a statement.

Hospital experience is a requirement for overseas employment.

Under San Luis' bill, hospitals that charge nurses would face a maximum fine of P100,000, and their administrators a maximum one-year jail term.

The penalty would be imposed on the president or treasurer of the hospital. If the offender is an association, corporation and the like, the penalty would be levied on whoever is responsible for the violation.

A warning would be issued to a hospital for a first offense. For a second violation, its license to operate would be suspended for at least six months. The hospital's license would be cancelled if it repeats the offense a third time.

Nursing graduates who had been made to pay the hospital would be refunded the full amount, plus interest of six percent per year until fully paid.

A hospital would also be required to pay fresh nursing graduates a salary not less than the minimum wage. The court may also fix the amount to be paid for services rendered.

According to San Luis, the lack of nursing jobs in the Philippines has forced many of them to look for jobs overseas.

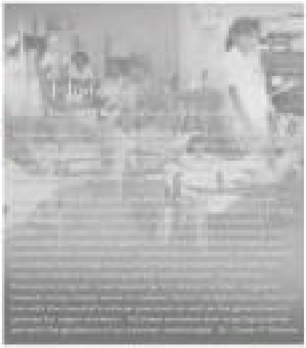
In 2008, there were more than 87,000 nursing graduates in the country, but only 27,799 passed the nursing board exam, he said.

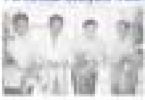
He said many nursing graduates had ended up in jobs outside their field. They now work in call centers, retail stores and non-professional positions.

Even those who managed to go abroad had not always worked as nurses with some ending up as caregivers, dental assistants and nursing aides, he said.

A New Era Begins For Makati Medical Center's Kidney Unit

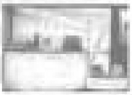
March 15, 2009 marked a pivotal period for Makati Medical Center, with the opening of its New Kidney Unit at the New Annex Building. The celebration commenced with a ribbon-cutting ceremony lead by Ms. Rosalie R. Montenegro, President and CEO, and Dr. Manuel D. Fernandez, Jr., Executive Vice-President and Director for Professional Services, assisted by prominent luminaries in Nephrology, Dr. Cesar P. Ramos, and Dr. Antonio V. Capco. Blessing of the new unit followed, which was presided by Fr. Mark Castro of the MMC Chaplaincy. Witnessing the historic event were the team of Nephrologists and Staff of the Kidney Unit, Department Heads, dialysis patients and relatives. Project Partners, B. Braun Avitum Philippines, Inc., headed by Country Manager Eduardo L. Rodriguez, and Baxter Healthcare Philippines, Inc., headed by Country Manager Amol Kelshikar. The affair also coincided with a lobby exhibit showcasing testimonials of dialysis patients to service satisfaction, and a grand display of the Dialog+ Hemodialysis machine from B. Braun Avitum, and the Home Choice machine for Peritoneal Dialysis from Baxter.

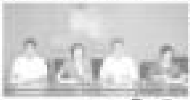














The Nephrology Team

Since early 2008, the MMC Kidney Unit Department and B.Braun Avitum Philippines laid down the foundations for a bigger and better kidney unit. Formalized with a partnership agreement in early 2009. The new Kidney Unit now combines enhanced quality services and facilities with its ever reliable and competent Health Professionals, plus the technological expertise of well-known dialysis company B. Braun Avitum of Germany.

Makati Medical Center's New Kidney Unit offers a full range of treatments for kidney diseases. It is equipped with the latest in renal care technology and staffed by highly skilled nephrologists and other health professionals. It offers the complete range of dialysis options as well as transplant services, the latest diagnostic tools and procedures, and out-patient check-ups.

Services and Facilities offered:



Quality has always been MMC Kidney Unit's foremost motivation and in partnership with B.Braun Avitum Philippines, Inc. and Baxter Healthcare Philippines, Inc., the New Kidney Unit serves as a testament to further institutionalize quality service for dialysis patients.





B BRAUN AVITUM

Baxter

MMC MAKATI MEDICAL CENTER

INQUIRER OPINION

Directed by Mikey

EDITORIAL



How about an Earth Hour every full moon?

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

Blair's flair

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

Population size of congressional districts

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.



Between the devil and whatever

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Norafyn Mustafa



Brains without bodies (1)

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



(To be continued)

Of senior citizens and the disabled

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

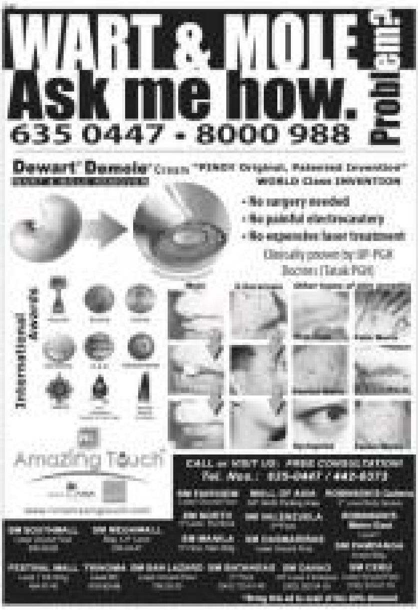


Run after the masterminds

Rail at the lapdogs, not at their American master

Bill to split Camarines Norte into 2 districts

DAET, CAMARINES NORTE—Citing a population of more than 500,000, Rep. Liwayway Vinzons Chato of the lone district of the 12-town Camarines Norte has proposed the division of the province into Tagalog-speaking towns and Bicol-speaking ones, to make up two districts before the 2010 elections.



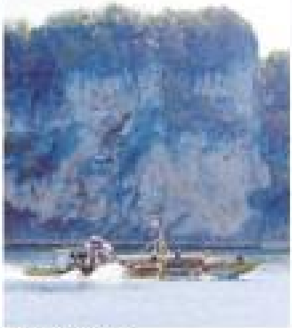
Tagalog-speaking

Funds





Provincial execs reject RH bill



VIEW FROM MASBATE

Baguio church groups wage fight against John Hay casino

C. Visayas lawmakers, govs form antidrugs task force

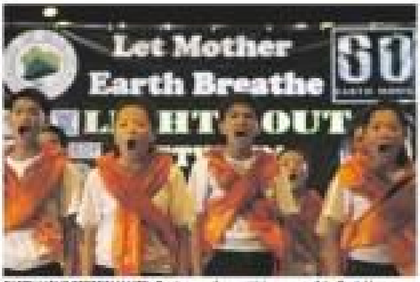


EMPLOYEES of various government agencies, environmentalists and residents of Marilao town in Bulacan clean up the Marilao River during the celebration of World Water Day in Prenza Dam.

Atienza shocked at dirty, murky Marilao River

[illegible]





EARTH HOUR PERFORMANCE Students perform a skit in support of the Earth Hour campaign on the grounds of Tower 1 on Ayala Avenue in Makati City.

RP shines in dim Earth Hour

[illegible]

Astounding success

[illegible]

Only fan, laptop

[illegible]

UPLB campus

[illegible]

Unaware of significance

[illegible]

Candles, gas lamps

[illegible]

Flash flood victims

[illegible]

Poetry

[illegible]

SO THE PEOPLE MAY KNOW

The Facts About the World Bank Procurement Issue

In April 2000, the World Bank (WB) approved the loan for the National Roads Improvement Management Program, Phase 1 (NRIMP-1) in the amount of 150 Million U.S. Dollars.

On March 25, 2009, the Office of the Ombudsman announced that it is recommending the filing of graft cases against 17 past and present DPWH officials for alleged violation of R.A. 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act. Specifically, the Office of the Ombudsman cited the violation in the "AWARDS OF CONTRACTS" for 3 road projects: 2 in Negros Province and 1 in Surigao-Davao area, which exceed the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC).

FACT #1. All DPWH actions relative to NRIMP-1 comply with World Bank procedural requirements.

One of the conditions of the WB loan is that procurement for all contracts under NRIMP-1 should follow the Bank's guidelines.

As part of the WB guidelines, documents such as advertisements, draft contract, prequalification criteria and report, bid evaluation report, bid opening minutes and abstract of bids should be submitted to the Bank for review and concurrence.

Another WB condition is the "NO CEILING RULE" on the award of contracts.

Under NRIMP-1, there were 10 Road Upgrading Projects, and among them were the Negros Road and the Surigao-Davao Road Projects.

Of the 10 Road Upgrading Projects under NRIMP-1, two were awarded at bid prices higher than the ABC while 6 were awarded at bid prices below ABC. All these awards were concurred by WB before the contracts were perfected.

The 2 remaining projects, the Negros Road and the Surigao-Davao Road, were FIRST bid out in 2002. The bids for these projects were higher than the ABC.

As the usual procedure, the results were sent to the WB. The Bank, however, did not concur with the results of the bidding.

FACT #2. Republic Act 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act which sets the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) as the limit of award for all locally-funded projects is NOT BINDING on foreign-funded projects according to the Supreme Court decision.

On January 26, 2003, R.A. 9184 was enacted, and one of its provisions is the adoption of the ABC as the Ceiling for Award.

The 2nd bidding for the Negros Road and the Surigao-Davao Road projects took place in 2004. The bids were higher than the ABC. Again, WB did not concur with the results.

During the 3rd bidding in 2006, the Negros Road project was repackaged into 2 sections. The bids for the 2 Negros Roads and the Surigao-Davao road were higher than ABC.

Was DPWH wrong when it recommended to World Bank for concurrence the Award of Contracts above the ABC for the three NRIMP-1 roads?

THE ANSWER IS NO!
BECAUSE WB GUIDELINES DO NOT RECOGNIZE "ABC" AS CEILING FOR AWARD.

In fact, the Department of Justice, in its legal opinion, said that
"EXECUTIVE AGREEMENTS (e.g. LOAN AGREEMENTS) SHALL BE RESPECTED."

The Supreme Court, in its 2007 decision in Abaya vs Ebdane, ruled that
FOR FOREIGN-FUNDED PROJECTS, THE LOAN AGREEMENTS PREVAIL OVER LOCAL LAWS.

Therefore, the WB procurement guidelines in the loan agreement for all projects under NRIMP-1 govern; and that the provision of R.A. 9184 limiting the ceiling of award of contract to ABC is not applicable.

In November 2006, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo approved the DPWH recommendation
TO WITHDRAW
the Negros and Surigao road projects from WB financing after the 3rd failure of bid.

Were the 3 road projects contracted under the WB loan?

THE ANSWER IS NO!
THE FACT IS THESE PROJECTS WERE WITHDRAWN FROM WORLD BANK FINANCING.

Was the government defrauded in the procurement process?

THE ANSWER IS NO!
-NO CONTRACTS WERE EXECUTED FOR THE REMAINING THREE ROAD PROJECTS.
-NO DISBURSEMENTS WERE MADE TO CONTRACTORS.

Where is the 33 Million U.S. Dollars for these projects?
THE WORLD BANK STILL HAS THE FUNDS.

Did the DPWH violate Republic Act 9184 as alleged by the Office of the Ombudsman for the Negros and Surigao Road Projects?

THE ANSWER IS NO!

WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK.
Please text to DPWH TXT2920. [TEXT DPWH (space) message and send to 2920.]
www.dpwh.gov.ph

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

Pinoys feel pinch of climate change

Study on climate change

7th most vulnerable

Happening right now

Stories told in words and music

On reading

New album

Parish scholars

Sponsors, next session

Red guerrillas tap YouTube, Facebook to fan revolution

Abu Sayyaf insists on total AFP pullout



Late SPORTS



So held to back-to-back draws



Aplus METRO
Editor: Abelardo S. Ulanday

DID YOU KNOW



39 nabbed for illegal gambling in QC

By Nancy Carvajal

THE POLICE YESTERDAY ARRESTED 39 PEOPLE DURING A RAID on an illegal cockpit in a residential area in Quezon City.

Those arrested, mostly men with ages ranging from 20 to 65 years old, were taken to the Quezon City Police District's headquarters in Camp Karingal where they would be charged with illegal gambling.

PO3 Aries San Jose of the QCPD's District Police Intelligence Unit told the Inquirer that they conducted the raid after receiving complaints about illegal cockfighting activities from residents in the area.

The fights were being staged in an old house with a sprawling lot at 173 Bignay St., Project 2, Quezon City which had been turned into a makeshift cockpit, the police said.

They added that the cockpit included a fighting ring, stalls for food and liquor and a holding area for roosters.

"The police can't just stand back and let something like that operate in the community," San Jose said.

He said the cockfight organizers had been given a permit to stage cockfights in the barangay as part of its fiesta celebration last week and also as a fundraising activity.

The permit, however, expired on Saturday.

"Despite earlier complaints from residents about the cockfights, we did not stop them prior to today because they were able to get a permit from the local government. But their permit expired yesterday so we had to act on the complaints from the public," San Jose told the Inquirer.

This was contradicted by a man who identified himself as Greg Cledan and the promoter of the cockfighting activities in the barangay.

"Our permit is until today and we have already made the necessary arrangements," he told the Inquirer.

But at the same time, Cledan said, "The police didn't have to make any arrests, all they should have done was to inform us that the permit to stage the cockfight had lapsed."





Earth Hour transforms Makati City's skyline



SWIM AT YOUR OWN RISK

Three boys wade in the waters of Manila Bay which was recently declared off limits to swimmers by the Manila City government. The ban was based on a warning from the health department about the dangers of swimming in the bay's polluted waters.

MMDA in talks to turn Tondo tenements to 'Tondominiums'

METRO Citizen's call



CLOSED U-TURN SLOT

Maynilad fixes leak

Motorists ignoring sign

Vendors take over Muñoz sidewalks

'Kotong' cops lying in wait

Busted street lights

Go after 'blind' jeepney drivers

Errant taxi drivers

Fixed pay for drivers

Vanishing stoplight

Bill filed banning street gangs



IN SUPPORT

METROBRIEFS

Pretrial hearing of landmark case set today

UP general alumni reunion, homecoming

No footage of kidnap incident, says cop

Spain weighs torture probe of Bush officials



EU marches seek action on poverty

WorldBriefs

Scientists identify new culprits for cancer

US artists open first exhibit in Cuba in 50 years

Prince William wants to fight in Afghanistan

Shoot'em up video games sharpen vision, says study



The WORLD

Most Afghan Taliban said to want peace

MUSA QALA, AFGHANISTAN—MOST AFGHAN Taliban are willing to lay down their arms, a former insurgent commander said, but are afraid they will be killed for defecting because the government cannot ensure their safety.



SALAM

The United States on Friday launched a new strategy in Afghanistan in response to the Taliban-led insurgency that is growing in strength and scope. More than 5,000 people, including 2,100 civilians, have been killed in the past year alone.

With violence at its highest level since the Taliban was ousted in 2001, the United States is sending some 21,000 new troops to bolster about 70,000 foreign soldiers already in Afghanistan trying to crush the insurgency.

Washington says the fight cannot be won by military means alone and its strategy review refers to the need to bring some of the insurgents in from the cold.

"Ninety-five percent of the Taliban want to reconcile with the government if they can be assured security," Mullah Abdul Salam, a former high-ranking Taliban commander and now governor of Musa Qala in southern Helmand province, said.

"But the government of Afghanistan cannot ensure their safety. If they defect to the government, the other Taliban will kill them. They are fighting for their lives," said Salam.

The government must promise to keep safe those insurgents who make peace, Salam said, but most of the militants are hedging their bets until it is strong enough to do so.

The Taliban "are just observing the security situation. At the moment the government is not much stronger than them. When it gets stronger they will come to the government side," said Salam, once a friend of Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar.

Despite being ousted following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, the Taliban were able to regroup in Musa Qala and Helmand because there were relatively few international troops and little influence from the central government. Reuters



Spy satellites spot nose of N. Korea rocket

SEOUL—SPY SATELLITES HAVE PHOTOGRAPHED the nose cone of a long-range North Korean rocket on its launch pad but it remains unclear whether it is carrying a satellite or a warhead, a report said on Sunday.

Global concern has been mounting over North Korea's announcement that it would launch a communications satellite between April 4 and 8.

The United States, Japan and South Korea believe Pyongyang is actually testing a Taepodong-2 missile that could, in theory, reach Alaska.

"Spy satellites spotted the upper part of the rocket had its coverings removed on the launch pad," an unnamed South Korean government source told Yonhap news agency.

"But it is impossible to tell what object has been loaded onto the round-shaped (rocket) top—a satellite or a warhead."

South Korea's defense ministry declined to comment on the report.

Seoul believes Pyongyang will choose its launch date based on weather conditions, Yonhap said.

The North's launch site is expected to have either snow or rain in the afternoon on April 4, cloudy skies on April 5 and clear skies from April 6 to 10, Yonhap said quoting the unnamed government source.

A top US general last week said the United States could shoot down the projectile if it was determined to be a ballistic missile, and Japan also said it would try to shoot down any rocket heading for its territory.

South Korea, Japan and the United States have warned that North Korea's rocket launch would be in violation of a UN Security Council resolution banning the communist state from carrying out ballistic missile activities. AFP

Arab summit to back Bashir

DOHA—AN ARAB SUMMIT IN QATAR ON Monday will seek to give backing to Sudan over an international arrest warrant for its president and ease a deep rift among Arab states over how to deal with ascendant Shiite power Iran.

Arab governments have struggled to respond to Iran's political clout since the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, bringing long-oppressed Shiite Muslims there to power.

The leaders of Egypt and Saudi Arabia see Iran's hand behind the strength of Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Palestinian territories—Islamist groups who refuse to renounce armed action in the Islamic Arab conflict with Israel.

Other Arab countries with good ties to Iran, such as Syria and Qatar, back the popular view in the Arab world that the policies of Hezbollah and Hamas are legitimate responses to Israel, which rejects returning Arab lands it seized in 1967.

Israel's recent war on Gaza exposed the divisions, with Qatar hosting a rebel summit that brought together Arab leaders plus Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and leading figures from Hamas. The meeting threatened to revoke an Arab peace proposal to Israel, championed by Washington's Arab allies.

Egypt and Saudi Arabia refused to attend, staging an economic summit of Arab leaders that had already been planned before the Gaza war made it smaller. Egypt is the Arab world's most populous country and Saudi Arabia is the world's biggest exporter of oil and the birthplace of Islam, making them regional heavyweights.

"The Doha summit is still a battleground between the emerging de facto alliance between Qatar, Syria and Iran, on one side, and the Saudis, Egyptians and Jordanians on the other," said Ali al-Ahmed, a US-based Saudi opposition figure. It was not clear if any Iranian officials would attend as observers. Reuters



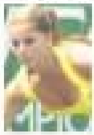
WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Que fires 69, ties for 8th /A30

SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic E. Melendres • Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

■ Berta-Alcantara bags it /A31



Arum seeks Manny's yearend foe

By Francis T.J. Ochoa



PACQUIAO

WITH DIVERGENT opinions as to whether or not Floyd Mayweather Jr. would make the perfect yearend foe for Manny Pacquiao, Top Rank Chief Bob Arum has decided to look at yet another foe—and possibly another weight division.

The [illegible]-year-old American promoter said Pacquiao could be ranged against Junior middleweight Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. late this year in what could be another classic Philippines-Mexico clash.

Arum came up with the idea in an interview with boxingscene.com after Chavez recently dominated Luciano Cuello in 10 rounds after going toe-to-toe at times with his rugged foe.

Asked who Chavez was being pencilled to fight soon, Arum said: "As far as opponents go, there is John Duddy and there is Oscar De La Hoya, if he continues to fight. And there is a third, which is a little different because of the size difference but it would be the biggest fight of the year, Julio Cesar Chavez vs Manny Pacquiao, Mexico vs the Philippines."

Pacquiao is training at the Wild Card gym in Los Angeles for his May 2 bout against Briton Ricky Hatton and trainer Freddie Roach said his ward is now in top shape.

Roach has said that a fight between Mayweather and Pacquiao is not exactly the best option after the British fighter.

"I don't have a lot of interest in Mayweather," [illegible] quoted Roach as saying. "Even if you beat him, you look bad doing it. Mayweather is skilled but I don't like his style—he's a runner [illegible]."

Arum has also said that Top Rank is not "too thrilled about Pacquiao and Mayweather."

PBA board meets on new format, Smart-RP five stint

Que fires 69, ties for 8th

Miñoza 15th; Edfors prevails



Pinoy pugs back in King's Cup

Crack Japan karters dominate Pagcor races



Olango swimathon challenge April 18

SPORTSWATCH

PSA Forum spotlight on 3 summer sports

78 matches lined up in Makati 4-cocker

P15.5-M 'Rambulan' resumes today at SJC

'It pains me that local equestrian is dying'

CLEAN LIVING



'Minda' t'wondo meet stakes Korea trip slots





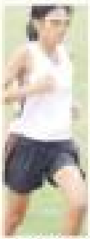
Berta-Alcantara bags it

Swede-Filipino pair whips foes in doubles final



BERTA: 100 ITF points

Mangrobang tops Mekong Duathlon



MANGROBANG

Davao quintets dispute NBTC 'Minda' crown

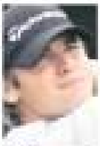
SPORTS



Pistons ruin Arenas return

Wizards star's jumper blocked in dying seconds







Tiger now second, 5 off O'Hair

Brawn gets debut F1 victory

BUSINESS

Think tank sees 30% chance of economic depression

'Recession-proof economies' hurting, too

By Abigail L. Ho

THE WORLD FACES A 30-percent chance of going into a depression as even emerging economies such as the Philippines—earlier considered relatively recession-proof—start to feel the pinch of the global economic downturn.

According to an Economist Intelligence Unit report, developed-world growth could slow to less than 1 percent a year from 2009 to 2013, characterizing a depression.

For non-Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, it said growth was likely to average between 1 and 4 percent during the five-year period.

It said export-oriented emerging markets such as the Philippines would suffer from a prolonged downturn in global trade.

Currencies

Peso-dollar rate

IN THIS ISSUE

Rebalancing growth



No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito

[illegible]

New realities

[illegible]

Internal, regional demand

[illegible]

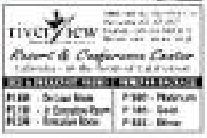
Think tank

From page B1

[illegible]



Equity investment outflow hit $1.3B in '08





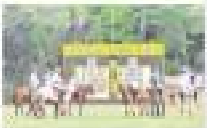




The 1st Globe Platinum Polo Cup at the Manila Polo Club





















More listed companies declared dividends in '08

P219.24B in cash payout

MARKET PLAY

Stocks seen sustaining rally

No Free Lunch

Non-traditional markets

Bayan to pay ₱1.4B in loans

Staying on track with rehabilitation plan

[illegible]

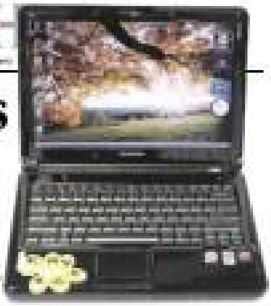
Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION (NPC),

Applicant.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

InfoTech



IDEAPAD Y330

Under gorgeous exterior beats a potent processor

Air conditioners set greener, cooler standards



EVEREST window 1HP

A light and charming notebook



Calculator that adds up your energy savings

Legislative changes sought to spur BPO growth

BPAP pushes for passage of privacy law, creation of new dep't

Demand for affordable housing resilient despite crisis, firm says

By Doris C. Dumlao

URC to raise ₱3B from notes







Agri exec sees growth in rice production

Job crunch expected to ease up

New hirings seen with fresh mine investments

RCBC marks surge in remittances

NTRC resists bid to clip finance chief's powers

New capacity may not be needed until '14

BUSINESS Monday

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Tax reforms, anyone?

Crisis good time to implement new measures

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY IS IN A RECESSION, and nobody's sure exactly when the tide will turn.

Economies previously perceived to be relatively recession-proof, including the Philippines, are now starting to show signs of stress.

Former Economic Planning Secretary and University of the Philippines economist Dante Canlas said the current economic downturn had done nothing but exacerbate the country's situation.

[illegible]

Hard and harder decisions

[illegible]

TAX B3

Shouldn't we have a backup system to a full poll automation?

MAPping THE FUTURE
Felicito C. Payumo



Primitive system



Smaller cost

Partial automation

Disturbing

MOVEMENTS

Vohra takes on more duties

ABS-CBN bares promotions

Roxas Group names team

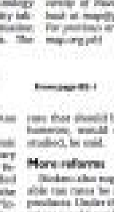
Tax reforms, anyone?



FELIPE Medalla

Cut incentives, tax consumption

Makes sense



BENJAMIN Diokno

More reforms



DANTE B. Canlas

INSTITUTE FOR SOLIDARITY IN ASIA REPORT

RP cities thriving, surviving despite downturn

PHILIPPINE CITIES ARE MOVING forward with development plans despite the impact of the economic crisis on local communities, according to the Institute for Solidarity in Asia (ISA).

[illegible]



[illegible]

Hard times offer opportunities in stocks

[illegible]

Rain, rain, don't go away

[illegible]

BUSINESS *Monday*



THE PEOPLE of Magsaysay Village in Barangay La Paz, Iloilo volunteer to build the rainwater collection system of their community.

Rain, rain, don't go away



CCBPI CEO David Lyons affixes signature on commemorative tablet during the Rainwater Harvesting Project launch.

By Rosneth M. del Rosario

WHILE NEWS ABOUT INVESTORS losing money because of financial scams and falling stock prices continues to hog headlines the world over, many remote parts of the country wish for just one simple thing: To have a steady and affordable supply of clean, potable, fresh water.

In today's wired world, it's hard to imagine that many Filipino families are still forced to take boat rides to neighboring islands just to buy their water supply for the day. Some have no choice but to drink coconut water as an alternative.

With a renewed commitment to help better the lives of the Filipino people, the Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines aims to change exactly this unimaginable—yet real—scenario happening in places where fresh water is either scarce or too expensive.

The foundation plans to do this with the launch of its "Rainwater is Life" project, a program that aims to solve the water problem by providing households with their own rainwater collection systems.



A RAINWATER harvesting tank in Iloilo

The main component of this project is the ferrocement tank, the rain collection tanks that can store 5,000 liters of water—enough supply to last a family for seven months.

Launched in November 2008, the program is a classic example of what good can happen when people work with what nature has to offer.

"Our objective is to work with nature to help enable equitable access to clean drinking water in underserved communities," said Coca-Cola Foundation president Cecile Alcantara. "We want to help these communities by utilizing the resource that is abundant and readily available to them—rainwater."

Aside from ensuring a steady supply of water for the community, diverting excess rainfall to the tanks also reduces the incidence of flooding and restores groundwater in surrounding areas.

The move, conducted in cooperation with the Bahaghari Sang Pag-ibig Foundation Inc. (BSPFI) and the Peace and Equity Foundation, is in line with Coca-Cola Foundation's growing initiative to preserve and conserve water resources.

Because of this, Alcantara said Coca-Cola targets to be "water neutral" by 2015. This means that, by then, every drop of water used in the company's business of manufacturing bottled drinks is returned to the environment.

"Rainwater is Life" initially targeted 120 households of the Magsaysay Village Community in La Paz, Iloilo City as beneficiaries of the rainwater collection tanks.

RAIN B2-5

Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan · Arts and Books Editor Lito B. Zulueta

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books







REMARKABLY preserved Boljoon Church, a national treasure

CARCAR AND BOLJOON

Cebu heritage through French eyes

A T ANOTHER TABLE SAT Mariquita Yeung, a friend who beamed that since we were flying by helicopter to the heritage town of Carcar, why not proceed to Boljoon (pronounced bol-ho-on) just a few towns away to see probably the most magnificent Spanish colonial church in Cebu province?

PRIDE OF PLACE



Augusto F. Villalon

Without waiting for our answer, she immediately phoned to tell the mayor to expect us.

What I like most about Cebu is that it is a place where serendipity always happens, and here it was turning up again. We were on a serendipity roll.

The weather soon partially cleared. Immediately we took off from a large vacant lot in two helicopters following each other in a low circle over the city past urban street patterns that are surprisingly orderly when seen from above.

We saw monumental buildings marking important plazas and broad avenues, and everywhere was the cityscape of tinted roofs densely crammed into a narrow area of the land between the congested coastline and the mountain range behind the city.

We flew southward, away from the city and above the heavily populated coastline for half an hour, until we landed behind a Carcar steel factory amid a large gathering of people watching the makeshift helipad etched on a muddy grass field.

Our dropping in was the mere event of the

PRIDE C4





Jolly 'Bee' makes for (quite) filling show



Two local shows

Advantage

Would it be fair to compare the Atlantis version with the 2007 BlueRep one?

Low-key

Madcap

Stylish

My Talent summer workshops at Eastwood City



THE BOYS of My Talent performing arts program

Book toasts Holy Angel University

Digital filmmaking workshops at La Consolacion-Manila

LA CONSOLACION COLLEGE MANILA is holding summer workshops on Digital Filmmaking and the Performing Arts for students, teens and adults April 13-May 7 (first batch) and May 13-June 3 (second batch).

A special Faculty Development Module for teachers is also being offered April 22-25 (first batch) and May 21-22 (second batch).

What's unique about these workshops is the inclusion of a module on Christian Ethics.

"World values are rapidly changing 24/7, so much so that there is a need, especially this time, to stop and reflect on the issues prevailing in our times—issues and concerns that we plan to deal with in our stories and scripts and eventually our feature and documentary films," said La Consolacion's Lito Casaje.



NICK Lizaso, Lito Casaje and Fr. Larry Faraon

Registration is ongoing. For interviews and screenings, call or visit the LCCM Admission Office at 986-6686, 313-0522, 313-0513 loc. 158. Visit www.lccm.edu.ph.

Cebu heritage through French eyes

Natural ventilation

Emerald green

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books





Creative and caring school for kids

ABS-CBN Children's Center builds a budding population of great young minds

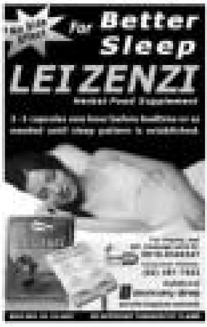


[illegible]

By [illegible]

FOR THIS SUMMER, ABS-CBN Children's Center is offering classes in violin, guitar, drums, voice lessons, hip-hop and basic jazz to children aged 4-12 years old, as well as arts and crafts for younger kids.

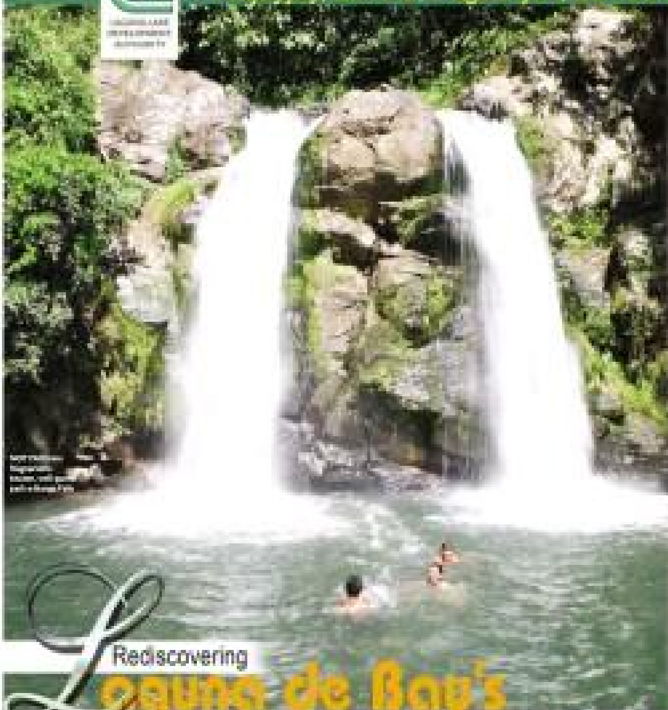
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Eco-Awareness and Adventure

Majayjay, Cavinti, Pagsanjan, Lumban and Tanay



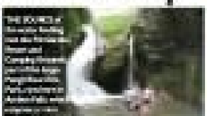
Rediscovering Laguna de Bay's eco-tourism loop

Old churches

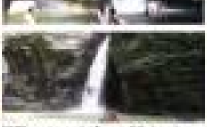
Lakes, waterfalls

Native products, agricultural produce















Protecting and conserving the Laguna de Bay watershed











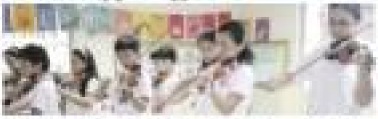
Wonders Natural and Man-Made

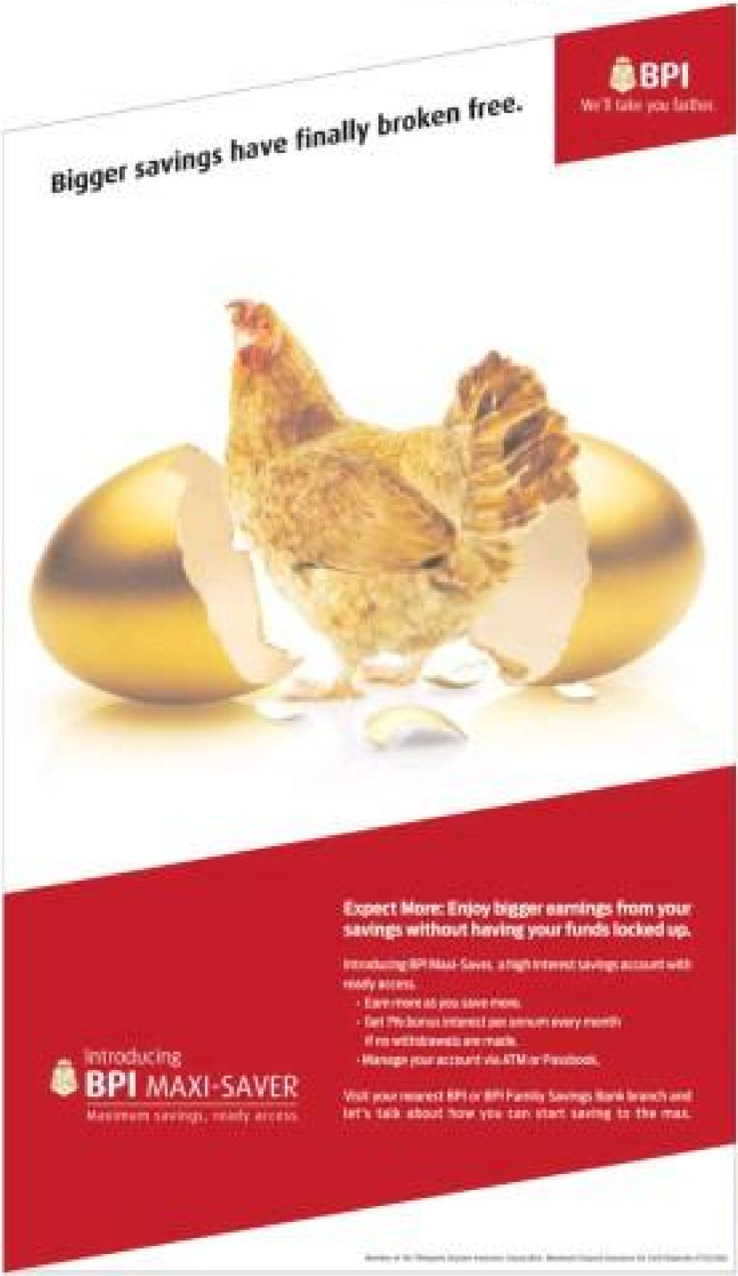
Lakes, falls, old churches, special crafts and engaging traditions. These are but some of the myriad tourism potentials of the eastern Laguna de Bay eco-tourism loop.

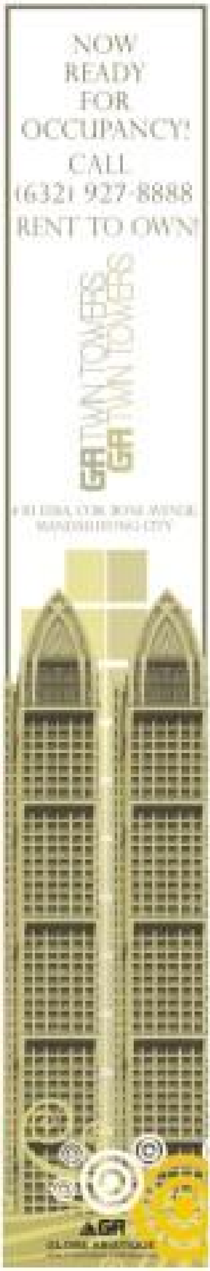


The Amazing Race to Save Laguna de Bay open for registration

Creative and caring. . .







ENTERTAINMENT

INSIDE
■ Hammy portrayals mar local 'Zorro'
Viewfinder /F4





ANGEL LOCSIN

Meeting Vi a big scare

'Steady' with Luis

Ces' captors still ask for 'pasa load'

DOLLY WOOD

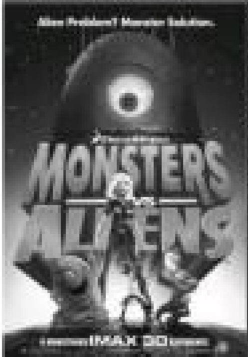


Dolly Anne Carvajal



SM CINEMA movietime

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MONSTERS VS ALIENS	MONSTERS VS ALIENS	MONSTERS VS ALIENS
DINOSAURS	KNOWING	
THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	LATE SCREENINGS	

LUZON

VISAYAS - MINDANAO

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GREENBELT 3

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AYALA CENTER CEBU

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TRINOMA

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At the Malls

GLORIETTA
BPI Installment Madness
March 18-April 5, Activity Center

GREENBELT
ArtPark presents "Monumental by Arturo Luz"
February 2-June 30, Greenbelt Parks

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Fitness at the TOWN
Every Mon, Wed, & Thu, 6pm, Town Plaza

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Graduation Sale
March 27 - 31 Mallwide

MARKET! MARKET!
Automatic Center Appliance Fair
March 9-31, Activity Center

TRINOMA
Enjoy spotting Animal Specials at TriNoma
April 3-5: 12-2pm & 6-8pm; Mindanao Lobby

ONSTAGE
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For booking & inquiries, pls. call 752-7862 & 757-3861

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glorietta · GREENBELT · TOWN · AYALA CENTER CEBU · Market! Market! · TriNoma



Meeting Vi a big scare

'Luis is very sweet and thoughtful; I like that'

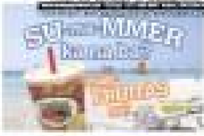
Ces' captors . . .

No more oil rigs for ousted AI's Sarver



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• The biggest car drifting exhibition at the Speed Circuit
• The hottest clubs like Ascend and Embassy Superclub at the Fort, Manor in Eastwood, and Club Vudu in Cebu
For the complete list of event details visit www.myworldmydsl.com

ENTERTAINMENT





A clean-cut vet and a footloose adventurer

Why a castaway, not the 'Survivor' winner, was picked to co-host Kapuso's environmental show



[illegible]



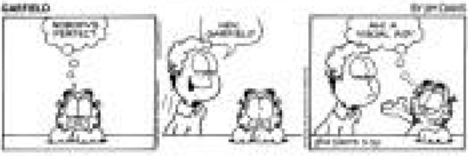


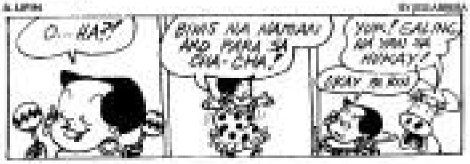






GARFIELD



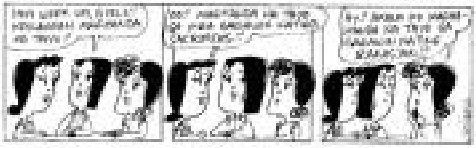


PUGAD BABOY



DICK TRACY





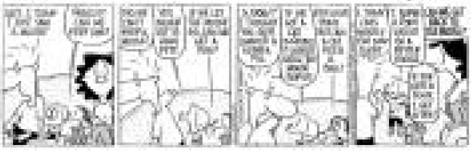
JAMES BOND



DIVINE COMEDY



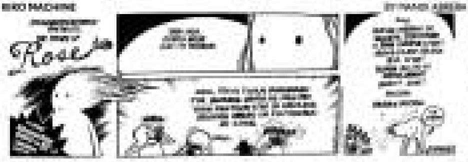
BABY BLUES





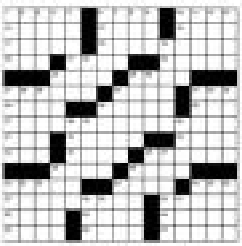




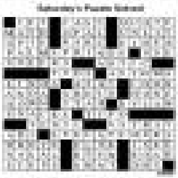


HOROSCOPE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Saturday's Puzzle Solved



CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

1								9
	4		2	6	1		5	
			9	3	8			
	7	9				1	6	
	1	5		7		8	9	
	2	3				5	4	
			6	8	7			
	8		1	5	2		7	
7								5

Difficulty Level ★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Answer to previous puzzle

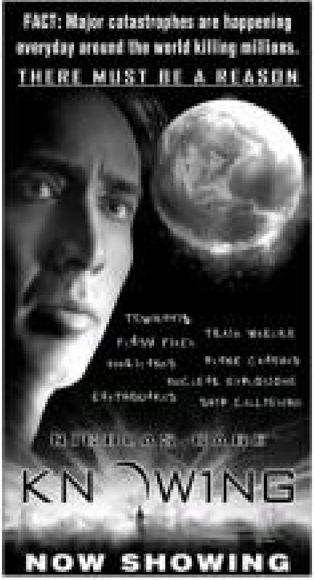
3	7	5	6	1	8	4	9	2
6	8	1	4	9	2	3	7	5
4	9	2	5	7	3	8	1	6
7	5	8	2	4	9	1	6	3
1	2	3	7	8	6	5	4	9
9	4	6	1	3	5	2	8	7
8	6	7	3	2	4	9	5	1
2	1	4	9	5	7	6	3	8
5	3	9	8	6	1	7	2	4



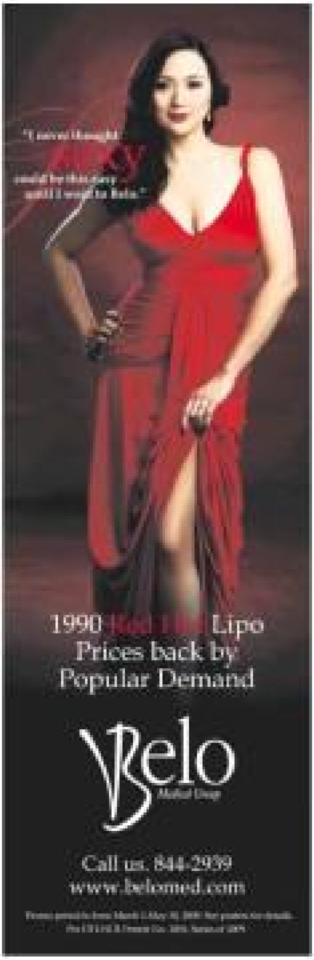
A clean-cut vet…

'Zorro' marred…















RICHARD Gutierrez as Zorro

'Zorro' marred by hammy portrayals

VIEWFINDER
Nestor U. Torre

LAST MARCH 23, GMA 7 fielded it's big, new teleserye to challenge ABS-CBN's hit series, "May Bukas Pa," on the prized evening time slot.

Will Richard Gutierrez's new starrer topple ABS-CBN's hit? If it doesn't, it certainly won't be from lack of trying on GMA 7's part.

The premiere telecast of "Zorro" was full of attention-calling plus factors, like prominent locales, a colorful cast of characters, period flavor, "localized" approach to the original oppressor-oppressed tale, and roleplays galore.

After a while, however, all these goodies got to be much too much, and the new series' debut telecast didn't end up on the side of angels. Here's why:

Initially, we really liked the show's decision to localize Zorro's story, making it come to bear on the injustices and rich-versus-class distinctions of the Spanish colonial period in the country. Later, however, we realized that the show's scripting was content to be disarmingly lame-jerk and stereotypical to the "historical" conflicts that it chose to dramatize.

The initial telecast also made poor use of its large cast of young and veteran stars, led by Gutierrez in the title. His characterization of the young Zorro is interesting because he's so awkward. But his heart doesn't seem to be in this latest assignment, as he merely goes through the motions of being 'dashing'—and the charm of his initially graphic portrayal quickly vanishes.

Most of his co-actors don't fare any better, coming up with hammy approximations of swarthy Spanish types. Some of them were so "over," that it was like watching a spoof—only these actors were supercontinued about what they were doing, so the broad humor that their hammy performances generated was decidedly lily-livered.

Too polite

The actors playing the Filipino characters fared better, because they were perforce less florid and mannered. Still, none of them came up with a particularly absorbing portrayal, so the new show's overall acting grade must be 'F' for frustrating.

On the other hand, the series' opening sequence was satisfyingly grand and visually exciting. It focused on the execution (by guillotine!) of a rebel priest—which, of course, the show's Masked Avenger tries to foil.

ZORRO P2

SICHUAN KIDS AT THE SM SCIENCE DISCOVERY CENTER

The SM Science Discovery Center recently hosted 150 kids from the earthquake stricken Sichuan province in China to a day of fun and excitement.

The children were in Manila upon the invitation of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo as expressed during her meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao last year. It is part of Philippines' contribution to the rehabilitation efforts in China.

The kids had the chance to experience tomorrow's technology today as they went through the different attractions of the SM Science Discovery Center. They enjoyed the Image Part, a haven photography buffs where their photos were transformed into a dream experience, and explored the Transport Station, where they got a glimpse of the history of trains and ocean liners.

The children had fun with Aibobay, Robot B, and Robby the Robot in Robot Inc., had an under-the-sea adventure in the Virtual Pool, went on a journey around the universe in Spaceship Cart, and had a glimpse of the world's tallest landmarks in the City Center Exhibit.

The SM Science Discovery Center is located at the SM Mall of Asia.



THE kids from Sichuan, China at the SM Science Discovery Center



GUIDE tours from Science Discovery Center assisted the kids in every exhibit



THESE kids enjoy the Gravitology Exhibit with the Busy Max

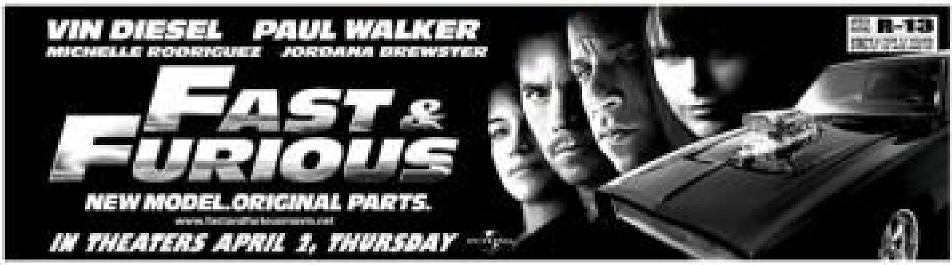
"PATIENTS PLEASE" is one of their favorites where they take out the human body parts like a doctor





THESE kids from Sichuan China enjoy a half day treat at SM Science Discovery Center at SM Mall of Asia.





LEARNING



To reach out to the unheard

Let's hear it for Marian Felicity Tan, summa cum laude

SHE FOLLOWED HER HEART and it has led her to the top of her class.

[illegible]



Playgrounds for the MIND

Member Schools

FEU Fine Arts ad majors win in Student Ad Congress

'A Midsummer Night's Dream'



PNU PARTNERSHIP WITH UNIVERSITAS NEGERI JAKARTA

Lyceum Batangas tops 4th Goldilocks cake decorating challenge

Free entrance test at Angelicum College

Puno guest of honor at LPU Awards Convocation

UP'S PUNO MEMORIAL LECTURE TACKLES POVERTY ALLEVIATION



UA&P Tambuli Awards 2009

Filipino school ranks 53rd in math, writing and reading proficiency

CEU offers new courses



UP marker unveiled

What kids can do this summer

What graduates should know

To reach out . . .

Quiz Bee Grand Finals to be held April 4

Armand V. Fabella's last 'lecture'



Dr. Armand V. Fabella

THERE ARE ONLY three things to fix in education, and everything else follows.

> Basic education should be 12 years; there's just no way around this

An educator to the end

By Dr. Vincent Fabella

EUREKA! Queena N. Lee-Chua



What graduates should know





DORIS Kearns Goodwin and Kofi Annan

'Turo-turo' technology allows better teacher-student interaction





STUDENTS of Cupang Elementary School in Muntinlupa are among the first to enjoy classroom use of Microsoft Windows MultiPoint. (Right) Dr. Fe Paz, Muntinlupa Division Superintendent, observes the class.



Increased computer use